

Authentic Community

Call To Community – So Far:

- Created to Be in Relationship – with God, others
- Example of Jesus – life in relationship
 - called people to serve in teams
- Example of Early Church – life in relationships
 - shared lives, served, grew, faced opposition
- Example of Apostles – ministered in teams
 - left teams to oversee
 - clearly taught the body needs all parts functioning

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Today – Call of Scripture to Community & What Happens

1. New Testament

- 50 passages dealing with nature of the church, who we are and what we are to be about
- 21 of those passages are ‘one another’ teaching or instruction. Disciples relating to disciples
- clearly over all – command to love one another:
 - John 13:34-35 ***“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”***

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a) Accept one another

- Romans 15:5-7 ***“May God, who gives this patience and encouragement, help you live in complete harmony with each other, as is fitting for followers of Christ Jesus. Then all of you can join together with one voice, giving praise and glory to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, accept each other just as Christ has accepted you so that God will be given glory” (NLT)***

- God loved people even before they responded
- gave his time and energy before we figured it out
- calls us to reflect this love to others
- note given & enabled by God as we participate
- 1 Peter 3:8,

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b) Encourage one another

- 1 Thess 5:10-11 ***“He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.”***

- our hope and future is found in Jesus – something we can lose sight of without reminders and encouragement

- be drawn back to what is important, what is true, be strengthened & encouraged to stand – from one another

- Col. 3:16, Heb. 10:25, Rom. 15:14,

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c) Bear with and Forgive one another

- Col. 3:13-15 ***“Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.”***

- we are imperfect – will offend, disappoint, sin against, drop the ball! How we handle that critical

- forgiveness is counter cultural, powerful, and clearly reflects God in our lives

- James 5, Eph 4:32

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d) Submit to one another

- Eph 5:21 ***“Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.”***
- culture dictates – your rights, you first, look out for #1
- scripture commands – we reflect Jesus, submission to will of the Father, and calling us to submit one to another.
- put others 1st, consider what they offer, allow them to exhort, encourage, invest in your growth
- Phil 2

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e) Serve one another

- Gal 5:13-15 ***“You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.”***

- serving is inconvenient, costly, takes intention, brings amazing reward.

- 1 Peter 4:10

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f) Honor one another

- Rom. 12:10 ***“Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.”***

- several thoughts about honoring

- listen carefully, keep confidence, refuse gossip, defend one another, be truthful

- devoted and honor – marks of genuine friendship, family

- 1 Peter 3:8, 2 Cor. 13

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2. The Impact of living This Way

a) Growth To Maturity

- discover how life in the family of God should be lived
 - modeled in relationship Col. 3:16, Heb 10:24-25
- avoid false teaching and damaging life behaviour
 - build relationships where you can trust the advice, they know your heart, guide and direct alongside
- others to guide you on a plan for growth
 - help you find solutions, bible truth, obedience in action

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b) Accountability & Restoration

- what you say, and your day to day life aligning.
- place for you to be honest, be encouraged to tackle issues one at a time
- place for forgiveness to be realized. Eph.4:32, James 5
- huge issue in culture – not just forgiving but restoration
 - Jesus and Peter after the cross
 - restored to full potential for Jesus

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c) Experience Radical love

- Heb 10:32ff ***“Remember those earlier days after you had received the light, when you endured in a great conflict full of suffering. Sometimes you were publicly exposed to insult and persecution; at other times you stood side by side with those who were so treated. You suffered along with those in prison and joyfully accepted the confiscation of your property, because you knew that you yourselves had better and lasting possessions. So do not throw away your confidence; it will be richly rewarded.”***

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So What

1. Clear In Scripture – Created for Authentic Community
 - made in the image of God, created for relationship
2. Clear that Horizontal relationship reflects God
 - we function as a body when, we glorify God when...
3. Clear Guidelines for life in Community of Faith
 - how we are to do life together
4. Clear that Growth and Function depend on each other
 - so get into authentic community with others